

**BYLAWS ( updated May,2005)**

**CITY OF HARTFORD  
Advisory Commission on the Environment**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME**

The name of this body is the City of Hartford Advisory Commission on the Environment that may also be known as "ACOTE".

**ARTICLE II**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Advisory Commission on the Environment is to assist and advise the mayor, the council and other departments in matters relating to Hartford's physical environment including but not limited to the quality of air, water and soil that affect the economic conditions, general well-being and physical health of its citizens.

**ARTICLE III**

**DUTIES**

The Commission shall seek to advise the City on issues of environmental equity, environmental quality, environmental safety and environmental health.

**This Commission will:**

Act as a conduit for information and education of Hartford residents and government officials on issues affecting the city's environmental health and well-being;

Act as an advocate for the environmental cleanup and prevention of pollution within the city;

Act in partnership with other agencies and organizations to promote policies and practices that impact the well-being of Hartford's residents as well as the ongoing dedication of a healthy environment in which to raise families;

Act as Environmental Ambassadors to promote our city as forward thinking and acting on environmental issues;

Advise the mayor and council on proposed legislation and policies that impact the environment;

Advocate for the full enforcement of environmental laws;

Create strong relationships with federal, state, local and quasi-governmental agencies to assure access to education, resources and other benefits;

Participate in and initiate specific projects to promote environmental awareness and best practices;

Engage in public and community relations activities;

Recommend bi-annual goals and a bi-annual Environmental Action Plan for the City of Hartford.

## ARTICLE IV

### **MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION I      The membership of the Advisory Commission on the Environment shall reflect a diversity of viewpoints regarding the appropriate level of environmental regulation in the City of Hartford. A majority of the Commission's members shall be Hartford residents.

The number of members on the Commission shall be fixed by the Commission from time to time, but shall not be more than fifteen (15) or less than seven (7). These numbers shall include officers.

SECTION II      **Appointments and Terms:** Commissioners shall be appointed by the mayor and approved by the Court of Common Council. The terms for commissioners shall commence at the beginning of the Commission Year.

SECTION III    **1. Voting Commissioners:** A majority of commissioners shall be persons actively engaged in activities and/or programs with goals and objectives related to improving environmental health. At least two (2) such commissioners shall be persons representing Hartford community organizations. Two (2) commissioners shall be persons representing businesses or entities regulated by the Department of Public Health and/or the Environmental Protection Agency. Such commissioners shall retain voting rights regarding decisions made and/or actions taken by the Commission. The full term of each commissioner shall be three (3)

years, except that two-thirds (2/3) of the commissioners initially appointed shall each serve a lesser term to allow for staggered appointments.

**2. Non-Voting Commissioners:** One (1) commissioner shall be the mayor or her/his designee. She/He shall not retain voting rights regarding decisions made and/or actions taken by the Commission.

SECTION IV     **Resignations:** If a commissioner is unable to serve for any particular reason, a resignation letter must be submitted to the Chair of the Advisory Commission on the Environment as soon as possible. Any vacancy shall be filled for the remaining portion of the commissioner's term in the same manner of appointment

If a commissioner is absent for three (3) regularly scheduled meetings in a calendar year without notification to the Secretary, s/he shall be deemed resigned. A certified/return receipt requested letter shall be sent to the commissioner by the Chairperson indicating that s/he may be reinstated by written request before the subsequent meeting. If no response is received, the resignation will be officially noted at the subsequent meeting.

## ARTICLE V

### **OFFICERS AND DUTIES**

SECTION I     The Commission shall, at its annual meeting in February, elect its officers from among the commissioners. The officers shall be the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

SECTION II     **Chairperson:** The Chairperson shall be the chief officer and shall preside at all meetings of the Commission. She/He shall make up the agenda for the meetings in consultation with the Executive Committee. She/He shall be the official spokesperson of the Commission in representing the policies of the body. If the chairperson is unable to represent the Commission, the Vice Chairperson shall speak in her/his place. If both the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson are unable to represent the Commission, the Secretary shall speak in place of the

Chairperson.

SECTION III **Vice Chairperson:** The duties of the Vice Chairperson shall be to perform such duties as may be assigned by the Chairperson. In the absence of the Chairperson from any meeting, or portion thereof, the Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson. In the event that the office of Chairperson becomes vacant, the Vice Chairperson shall serve in that office until a new Chairperson is nominated and elected in accordance with these bylaws. In the absence of the Secretary from any meeting, or portion thereof, the Vice Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Secretary. In the event that the office of Secretary becomes vacant, the Vice Chairperson shall serve in that office until a new Secretary is nominated and elected in accordance with these bylaws.

SECTION IV **Secretary:** The duties of the Secretary shall be: to record all meetings and to review the minutes of all meetings which have been prepared by the assigned city staff; take roll call and record absences; notify designated alternates of their eligibility to vote upon the excused absence of commissioners; have custody of all records and documents; draft correspondence for the Commission; notify city clerk of all official meetings and the cancellation of such meetings; and perform such other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

SECTION V No two commissioners representing the same organization shall concurrently be officers of the Commission.

## ARTICLE VI

### **COMMITTEES**

SECTION I There shall be two (2) standing committees: Executive Committee and Membership Committee.

- 1. Executive Committee:** The Commission's three officers, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary shall comprise an executive committee. The duties of this committee shall be to set the agenda for meetings and review matters requiring action before regularly scheduled or special meetings. The Executive Committee shall also perform such appropriate functions as may be helpful to the work of the Commission. The Executive Committee shall have all the powers of the Commission between meetings, and shall report to the full Commission on any action taken between meetings at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission.

- 2. Membership Committee:** The Membership Committee should be actively involved in suggesting people for appointment to the Commission. The Committee should identify, prioritize, recruit and recommend new Commission members for appointment who have an interest in the City and environmental issues and adequate time for participation.

The number of members to be considered for appointment is determined by the number of members whose terms have ended or positions that are vacant.

The Membership Committee shall interview candidates. Once the recommended person is appointed to the Commission, the Chair of the Commission should write a welcoming letter inviting her/him to the next scheduled meeting and a Commissioner's Manual prepared for her/him.

The Membership Committee shall recommend a slate of officers to be elected at the annual meeting.

- 3. Other Committees:** All other committees shall be established through a motion at a regular meeting and be established according to need.

SECTION II Each member shall serve on at least one committee.

## ARTICLE VII

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

SECTION I The Commission shall elect, from among the commissioners, a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson, and a Secretary at its annual meeting in February.

SECTION II **Nominations and Elections Procedure:** Nominations shall be made for the Commission Officers by a Membership Committee of three (3) commissioners appointed by the Chairperson. The Membership Committee Chairperson shall submit a slate of officers at the annual meeting to be voted upon by the Commissioners providing that, in addition to the slate made by the Membership Committee, nominations may also be made from the floor by any commissioner for any office to be filled. Officers will be elected by an absolute majority of commissioners present, providing there is a quorum. The elections of officers shall be conducted in the manner of secret ballot.

SECTION III     **Terms:** The term for officers is one year. However, an officer may be re-elected for a second consecutive year. An officer may not hold the same office for more than two terms in any four year period. A commissioner shall hold no more than one office at a time.

SECTION IV     **Vacancies:** The Commission, when necessary, shall fill any vacancy of officers positions within two (2) months of the vacancy in accordance with Article VII Section II of these bylaws. Any person elected shall hold office for the balance of the term of the position and may subsequently hold office for two terms in any four-year period.

## ARTICLE VIII

### **MEETINGS**

SECTION I       The Commission will hold no fewer than ten (10) meetings each year. The Commission Year shall be from February 1 to January 31.

SECTION II       **Special Meetings:** The Chairperson may call special meetings at any time, and the Chairperson shall call a special meeting upon the request of three (3) commissioners.

SECTION III      **Cancellations:** The Chairperson may cancel or postpone meetings at any time and shall see to it that the Commission is notified of such cancellation or postponement.

SECTION IV       **Quorum:** A majority of commissioners will constitute a quorum.

SECTION V       **Notification:** The Secretary of the Commission shall notify the City Clerk's office of all regularly scheduled and special meetings as well as cancellations of meetings in accordance with the Procedures for Boards and Commissions.

## ARTICLE IX

### **AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended at a regular meeting after the proposed amendment is sent in writing to all members along with a notice of meeting and approved at the next regular meeting at which a quorum is

present by two-thirds vote from the membership.

Matters of procedure and parliamentary practice undefined in the bylaws shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order*.